1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1936) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3 Mirebalais

the *loa*. In one instance a man wore a red shirt with black crosses appliquéd on it; dresses of this type worn by women or children are made of cotton cloth, pieced together patchwork-quilt fashion, of either three, seven, seventeen, or twenty-one different colors or patterns, with reds, blues, and white predominating. These garments are worn for a specified time, also named by the *loa*. The term *pénitence* has been taken from Church terminology, and the motivating sanction derives equally from African and Christian concepts;* for example, the wearing of the garment is a compliment to the African deities represented by the colors, while the various rules about abstinence during its term of wearing is the European pattern of "penitence."

The elaborate cicatrizations, or raised designs made by scarifying the body, which marked the slaves newly arrived from Africa have quite disappeared, but a few scars can be discerned on the body or arms of a man by a practiced eye. These represent an African carry-over in the form of a *garde* applied by the injection of some magically endowed substance into a cut which thereafter gives what may be thought of as a kind of spiritual inoculation. African fashions of hair-tying have been retained by the women almost unchanged, and, as in Africa, hair-braiding is a highly developed art, so that the styles in which hair can be braided seem innumerable. This is particularly true of dressing the hair of small girls, whose heads are decorated with braids going the length of the skull, or dividing the scalp into small squares, each with its tuft of hair, or by a part in the middle with lines going at right angles from it across the head. These styles of braiding are not named as in other parts of the New World and in Africa, but the tradition of intricate braiding has lost none of its vigor.

The implements of the Haitian are both of European and African derivation. The ubiquitous machete, a saber-like tool employed in all manner of ways, from chopping down trees

L: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
Mirebalais

to cutting fruit, though seen in Africa, was probably introduced there by the early traders, and all machetes found today in Haiti are imported from Europe or America. The same is true of the hoe, for the short-handled, broad-bladed West African hoe has given way to the European long-handled type, though the blade of the Haitian hoe is somewhat broader than that used in America and Europe. Despite the presence of domesticated animals to draw the plow, this implement has never gained favor in Haiti, nor have recent efforts to teach the Haitian peasant the use of the plow achieved any degree of success. He prefers his African mode of cultivation, to say which implies more than just the employment of a certain implement, since even such matters as the manner in which he employs his hands and feet in the process of planting are included. When the Dahomean plants, for example, he holds a calabash of seed under his left arm, from which he takes the grains with his right hand. As he moves down the rows of newly turned earth, he makes a depression with the heel of his right foot, drops a few grains into this depression and, replacing the earth with his toes, takes a step so that he can repeat the process with his left foot. This is exactly the manner in which Haitians were observed planting in the valley of Mirebalais.* Unlike the usage in Africa, however—where the men clear the ground, the men and women plant, and the women tend the growing crops—the European pattern, which places agriculture in all its essential phases in the hands of men, has been taken over almost in its entirety.

The women have retained almost without change the African modes of preparing food. Grain is first pounded in an African-like mortar, with an aboriginal type of pestle, while the shelled kernels are winnowed in a large round basketry tray. The cooking is either done on a raised mud platform in the cooking shelter, as in West Africa, or on three stones, employed as rests for the pots, a method equally characteristic of Central Africa. In the Haitian cuisine the prevalence of stews, of

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3
[P112-F]

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7. A small coumbite, northern Haiti.

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8. Coumbite, southern Haiti. Farmer players at the right; flag of the combite at the left.

J: Courlander B-5 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3
[P 112-J]

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19. Fishermen going out to sea. The women and girls are considered hardier farmers.

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20. Fishermen of Fifi du Maniche, on the Bay of Caracol.

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3
[P.112-K]

16. Man with a machete making a wari board. The machete is used for cutting trees, trimming brush, weeding gardens, fashioning wooden objects such as drums and mortars, and many other purposes.

17. Winnowing grain with a winnow tray.

D. Courlander B-5 (1907-1968) 1968 [illegible]

rhythmically, to the accompaniment of drums, cans or horns, while a singing leader composes topical songs in which the laborers join.

The tools which a rural Haitian chooses, and the way he uses them, often are in a West African tradition. He performs a multitude of tasks with his machete, or bush knife: weeding a garden, peeling an orange, cutting down a tree, making a drum or maraca, opening a coconut. It is an all-purpose tool, as it is in Africa. Until a few years ago it was supplemented by the extra-long, heavier, "double machete." The axe and the chisel are known and used too, but the machete is supreme. The hoe is the tool for tilling the soil, even in the flat country, and even though the Haitian has horses and cattle which could pull a plow. Horses are for riding and not for pulling. In carrying loads, the Haitian peasant still prefers the head to the shoulders. If he has a donkey, the donkey will carry for him. An old Haitian proverb goes: "Mèçi Bondieu pou' bourrique: li, si nous pas gainyain bourrique: I faut Haitien pa'lé tout bagaille" (Thank God for the donkey, if we didn't have the donkey the Haitian would have to carry everything)." Generally speaking, the rough and rocky terrain of Haiti and inadequate secondary roads have done nothing to encourage the use of carts or wagons.

Corn is stored in the trees, as in West Africa, or in granaries built upon stilts, also as in West Africa. The Haitian makes his fire in the African fashion, with several long sticks or poles meeting point-to-point in the heart of the fire. As the ends are consumed, or sticks are pushed toward the center. Grain is pulverized in large wooden mortars, as in West Africa, and winnowed in a woven tray. Fish traps are sometimes woven in the traditional West African manner, and fishermen often set their nets in converging spirals and beat the water with sticks to drive the fish to the center. And on the rivers and lakes are to be seen dugout canoes of a kind familiar on the inland waters of West Africa.

The folklore of the fields contains many themes known to the West African. One old Haitian farmer, discussing the spiritual relationship of the planter to the earth, declared that a man must be strong and potent when he plants, else the crops will be stunted and sickly. For this reason, he said, a man must not plant seeds for day after he has had sexual intercourse, because he has been temporarily drained of his life-giving powers.[2]

The tale of the hoe that worked by itself in the fields is also widespread. It enters many animal and Bouki stories, and also is known in a form that is familiar in West Africa. In this story, there was once a man who owned a hoe which worked by itself whenever a magical formula was pronounced. It would stop working whenever the magical

[2] (For footnote, see Category 116, P 352.—Ed.)

D. Courlander 8-5 (1905-1963) 1960 893 H681 893

of drum making is a very skilled one, but the tools are The craft simple: chisels, machetes, and fire. The core of the log is removed by burning and gouging, and the outside is shaped with a machete, or sometimes a hatchet. The wood is selected and processed carefully. Firing of the core of the log depends a good deal on how dry the wood is, for the wood must burn slowly. It is believed that wood cut at the right stage of growth and at the right phase of the moon is resistant to the ever-present powder-post beetles. Mahogany was once favored because it was durable and beetle resistant, even though it was heavy. But in recent decades mahogany has become scarce, and modern drums are made of lighter woods.

Drums made in the nineteenth century not only conformed to the patterns of certain West African prototypes but were also carved and decorated. Some of these old drums are still to be seen, but there are not many left. An ancient carved master drum (previously cited) has fortunately been preserved by the Bureau d'Ethnologie. But between the ravages of the powder-post beetles, age, and the periodic orgies of drum burning by the church and misguided public officials, most of these ancient works of art have long since disappeared. During the American occupation of Haiti—from World War I to 1930—American military personnel also contributed to the mania for drum burning. And as late as 1941 there was a massive, cleric-inspired drive to wipe out these instruments as remnants of *savage* elements in Haitian life.

The effect of this war against the drum was only to improve the business of the professional drum maker. Drums had become expendable, hence they were made simpler. The carved decorations disappeared. Paint was substituted, and less attention was given to detail. The important thing was to produce a good functional instrument. But the creative instincts of the drum makers sometimes still take over, and many of the modern drums are beautifully proportioned, with delicate geometric patterns carved around the base, or foot. Among certain categories of drums the painted decorations consist solely of the name of the loa to whom the instruments have been dedicated—St. Jacques perhaps, or Papa Pierre, or Erzilie.

Drums differ in design according to the use for which they are intended. The Arada or Vodoun drums are used primarily in connection with the dances and rituals of the Vodoun cult—the cult built around the gods and rites of Arada and Yoruba theology. They resemble closely drums which are used today in Dahomey, Nigeria, and Togoland. They usually come in sets of three. The largest, the *manman* (also called *hounsi* or *hounsigi*), may be three to four feet high. The middle-sized drum, or *second* (also called *grondé* or *mayor*), is about two feet

(TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 193)

H. Courlander H-4 (1937-1939) 1960 SW3 Haiti SW3

easily be hidden, but the gankos were simply slipped into the straw roofs and thus put out of sight. Moreover, by some strange process of reasoning, military authorities regarded the bamboos as "harmless," though they were used for the same purposes as the contraband drums.

There are numerous other kinds of simple percussion devices. One such instrument, now less commonly seen than previously, is a length of open bamboo laid in the crotches of two Y-shaped sticks set in the ground. Like other cane, the bamboo is beaten with two sticks. Some Haitians believe that in former days such bamboos were played in batteries like a xylophone.

Sometimes a light-weight wooden cylinder, or perhaps a drum deprived of its playing head, is carried by the timekeeper of a combite. It, also, is played on the side with sticks.

Wooden mortars for pulverizing grain take on the character of musical instruments when used in combination with voices. When two or more mortars are used, with two men or women wielding the long pestle-like pestles in each mortar, the rhythmic effects can become fairly complicated.

The *claves* or *palos* (small hardwood sticks) are used primarily in connection with secular dances of a Cuban type, or to accompany such instruments as the guitar and the marimba. One stick is held loosely in the natural fold of the hand, so that it is free to vibrate, and is struck sharply with the second stick. The tone is almost metallic because of the hardness of the wood, usually lignum vitae. The name of the instrument is recognizable as a form of *clavo*, or *clave*, Spanish for "peg" or "nail." It is thought that wooden shipbuilding pegs provided the name for this device, which has equivalents in West Africa.

Among the folk instruments there are various kinds of horns and trumpets. Cows' horns are played musically in some parts of the southern peninsula, though usually they are used as ritual instruments and signaling devices. Wooden trumpets called *pitonos* are carved from the stems of the papaya tree. Conch-shell trumpets, known as *lambis*, are commonly used as signaling devices by fishermen. They are also to be found among the cumbites, in Rara festivities, and occasionally in rituals, where they are usually identified with sea deities. In carnival times the old fashioned phonograph horn makes its appearance as a combined trumpet and voice amplifier.

Probably the most important of the trumpets is the one made of bamboo. It is called a *vaccine* or *lwa bwa-pipe*. Both names have interesting origins. The cow's horn was at one time used for magico-medical purposes. The leaf doctor used it as an "applicator" of powders and potions. A small opening was made in the point of the horn, and

1 [See plate 8, p. 112-F. -- Ed.]

3: Leyburn Z-4,5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

The people of the island were able to maintain some continuity with the past, even while the new setting and changing conditions led to the development of certain innovations in society and culture. In a few Caribbean societies, Haiti included, freedom brought with it the opportunity to create a yeomanry—an independent, landholding class of agriculturists who produced most of their own consumption needs and also produced commodities for sale. These were "reconstituted peasants," whose ways of life combined elements from the African and American Indian past, as well as considerable European and Asian influences, in new cultural constellations.

Haitian country folk are a particularly good example of such a historical process. The crops Haitian yeomen cultivate include the maize, sweet potatoes, and manioc of the indigenous American Indian (Taino) people, and other cultigens such as papaya and avocado which had been domesticated in mainland aboriginal America; and items like taro and mangoes from Oceania, sesame and sugarcane which originated in the Middle East and India, and vegetables from Europe. Their domestic animals, including cattle, swine, and fowls, are nearly all from the Old World. The chief agricultural tools—hoe, billhook, and dibble, which are well adapted to Haiti's shallow topsoil and hilly terrain—may be European or African in origin; the practice of burning off weeds before planting may be African or American Indian. In the case of each trait—crop, tool, practice—one is confronted by the diverse and entangled culture history of the Haitian people. What is true of agriculture is true of all else. The religion of Haiti is at once two religions rather than one: Catholicism *and* vodoun. Yet these two belief systems form a single ideology for most Haitians, particularly in the rural areas and among those of the urban lower classes. The Creole language is similarly complex in origin. While its lexicon is predominantly derived from French, parts of its syntax are not of Romance origin. For instance, the use of prepositive nominalizing particles and the absence of gender typify Haitian Creole, and are decidedly not Romance in character. Terminology shows much the same; for example, animal names and anatomical terms are mainly French in origin, but some cooked foods carry names of African provenience.

The "mixing" of various elements of culture from different traditions is, of course, neither uniquely Caribbean nor uniquely Haitian. All cultures are growths out of the past, and change by losing and gaining traits and by combining and recombining their substance in